95. (Newly added) The modular lighting system of claim 94, wherein the peg comprises a contact portion for making electrical contact with the horizontal member.

96. (Newly added) The modular lighting system of claim 94, further comprising a furniture piece coupled between the first and second support pin assemblies.

97. (Newly added) The modular lighting system of claim 96, wherein the furniture piece comprises a shelf, desk, clothes rod, or display case.

98. (Newly added) The modular lighting system of claim 96, wherein the furniture piece comprises a light, the light being electrically coupled to the first and second support members.

99. (Newly added) The modular lighting system of claim 98, wherein the light is disposed on the underside of a shelf, or inside a desk.

REMARKS

Summary Of The Office Action

The drawings are objected to for including reference signs that are not mentioned in the description.

The disclosure is objected to because of minor informalities as to punctuation and grammar.

Claims 1, 16, and 24 are pending in the present application.

Claims 1, 16, and 24 have been rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over the specified claims of U.S. patent No. 5,695,261.

Summary Of Applicants' Response

Applicants have amended the specification and claims to correct the various informalities noted in the Office action.

Applicants respectfully traverse the obviousness-type double patenting rejection.

Detailed Response

Applicants have amended the specification to include reference to the reference characters used in FIGS. 8A and 9. Applicants note that reference character "91" of FIG. 22 is already mentioned in the specification at page 15, line 29.

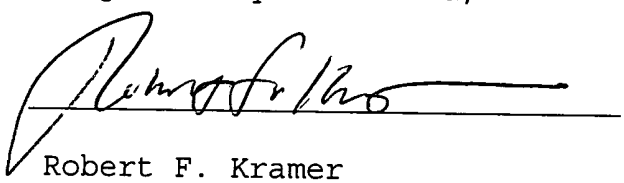
Applicants have also amended the specification to correct the informalities identified in paragraph 2 of the Office action. The specification has been reviewed to find and correct other minor errors. No new matter is introduced by the amendments.

In addition, applicants have cancelled claims 1, 16, and 24, and added new claims 30-99 to more clearly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of their invention. Support for new claims 30-99 can be found throughout the specification. No new matter has been added.

With regard to the judicially created obviousness-type double patenting rejection, applicants have cancelled

claims (claims 1, 16 and 24) and added new claims (claims 30-99) to obviate the double patenting rejections. The new claims 30-99 are directed to a modular lighting system rather than a modular furniture system, and claim distinct subject matter. Therefore, applicants request that the double patenting rejection be withdrawn upon consideration of the distinct subject matter claimed. To the extent any obviousness-type double patenting rejections still apply to new claims 30-99, applicants offer to file an appropriate terminal disclaimer when the application is otherwise in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert F. Kramer
Reg. No. 51,242
Attorney for Applicants

I hereby Certify that this Correspondence is being Deposited with the U.S. Postal Service First Class Mail in an Envelope Addressed to: Hon. Commissioner for patents P.O. Box 2327. Arlington, VA 22202, on

04-03-2003

LILY X. JIANG

Signature of Person Signing

FISH & NEAVE
Customer No. 1473
1251 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10020-1105
Tel.: (212) 596-9000
Fax: (212) 596-9090

APPENDIX TO REPLY TO OFFICE ACTION

This appendix presents the specification amendments that have been made in bracket-and-underline format.

The first full paragraph on page 6 has been amended as follows:

Panels 16 are removably mounted to vertical members 12 to substantially conceal the supporting framework and supporting wall as well as to provide an aesthetically pleasing background for the merchandise to be displayed. Modular furniture such as lighted shelf 18, clothes rack 20, and light fixture 22 include brackets 23 which are designed to removably engage vertical members 12, allowing the furniture pieces to be positioned as desired. Similarly, smaller items such as spot-light 26, hooks 30, and shelf 32 may be mounted in sockets located in horizontal members 14 and panels 24.

The third full paragraph on page 8 has been amended as follows:

Cross sectional views of various illustrative embodiments of vertical member 12 are shown in FIGS. 4A through 4F. The cross section shown in FIG. 4D corresponds to the embodiment of vertical member 12 shown in FIG. 2, including two columns of slots 42 in outer member 39 and corresponding slots 46 in conductor 44. Outer member 39 also includes side holes 57, panel mounting holes 40 and cap 41. An alternative embodiment having only a single column of slots 42 is shown in FIG. 4C; otherwise, the embodiment of FIG. 4C is the same as

that shown in FIG. 4D. Furthermore, the embodiments illustratively depicted in FIGS. 4A and 4B, are constructed similarly to those shown in FIGS. 4C and 4D, respectively, except that in FIGS. 4A and 4B the vertical [element have] member 12 has slots in opposing sides 39a and 39b. Thus, the embodiments of FIGS. 4A and 4B may be used in situations wherein both the front and back of vertical members 12 may be visible, such as when a modular display is located in the center of a retail store.

The first full paragraph on page 10 has been amended as follows:

FIGS. 8A through 8D are detailed drawing showing various means of energizing conductors 44 of vertical members 12. In the embodiment of FIG. 8A, a wire 91 is screwed to a bottom portion of conductor 44 [and] using screw 94 through washer 95 and eyelet 92. The other end of wire 91 is strung to a power source for the modular furniture system. Cap 96 fits into the bottom of vertical member 12. This method of energizing conductors 44 is mechanically and electrically simple keeping manufacturing costs low; however, each vertical member must be wired individually making set-up more costly and prone to wiring errors.

The second full paragraph on page 11 has been amended as follows:

Referring now to FIG. 9, the design of an illustrative embodiment of shelf support 18, including light fixture 106, is described. Brackets 23 are attached to each

end of cross supports 100 using insulative blocks 102 and screws 104. Preferably, cross supports 100 are made of aluminum and insulator blocks 102 are made of a machinable plastic such as Nylon or Delrin. Light fixture 106, including lighting element 108, reflector 110, and bezel 112 is then attached to cross supports 100. Electrical leads 116 provided at either end of light fixture 106 are connected to corresponding brackets 23 through screw holes 85 such that leads 116 are electrically coupled to a portion of the nickel plating (see FIGS. 3A - 3C) exposed through powder coating 90 at area 87. Heat reflector 114 provides thermal insulation to prevent damage to a shelf resting on the cantilever portions of brackets 23.